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State Dept. Pays \$16,900 a Year for Nothing

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WASHINGTON, June 5—

Every workday morning Otto F. Otepka, a \$16,900-a-year government employee, goes to the State Department, and every afternoon he goes home. During the eight hours in between, Otepka does nothing but read the Congressional Record.

Otepka is chief of the State Department security evaluation division. But he is not permitted to do the work for which he is paid.

He gets no important department mail. In an entire year he has had only two department phone calls. Fellow workers snub him. He's not invited to office luncheons or department social affairs.

A Lonely Life

It's a lonely life for Otepka, 49 and ruggedly handsome. He believes his office is bugged. He doesn't trust his desk telephone. He won't let his private briefcase out of his sight, even takes it to the washroom with him.

He reads the Congressional Record because his superiors told him to—after they filed charges against him that can cost him his job. Reading the record is supposed to keep Otepka busy until a hearing is held on his ouster. He has been doing "mostly nothing" for a year now—a hearing date still hasn't been set.

Otepka has been in government service 28 years, moving up all the time—until last year. His troubles started after he testified in November 1961, and March 1962 before the Senate internal security subcommittee. As a longtime security expert, Otepka told the Senators that some new State Department appointees were being given rush-job security clearances.

The committee was investigating Cuban Premier Fidel Castro's rise to power and his links with communism. Otepka had something critical to say about that, too, in connection with high state officials and State Department security practices.

Early in 1963 Otepka was called back to the committee. Some of his earlier testimony differed from statements made by other department officials. ~~Tell~~ ^{He} he was right. Otepka gave committee counsel Jay Sourwine three confidential documents.

Order Cited

This was all right, Otepka said, because Sourwine had security clearance. Besides, Otepka insists, the documents didn't endanger national security.

But the department said



Otto F. Otepka

Otepka violated a 1948 order by President Truman forbidding unauthorized disclosure of executive department files. Otepka concedes this,

but points to a 1948 law which says "the right of any member of the classified civil service to furnish information to any member of Congress shall not be denied."

Otepka also leans on a 1958 joint Congressional resolution saying "any person in government service should put loyalty to country above loyalty . . . to any government department."

Nevertheless the State Department said Otepka's acts were insubordination, and on June 27, 1963, charged him with conduct unbecoming an officer.

Phone Tapped

To get evidence to back up the charge, Otepka's phone was tapped. Later John F. Reilly, deputy assistant secretary of state for security, and Elmer D. Hill, chief of the technical services division, were fired because they lied to the committee, saying they knew nothing of the wiretap. David Belisle, Reilly's special assistant, told the committee he knew nothing of it, then recanted and said he knew of it but didn't do it. He was transferred to other work outside the security section.

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